

# RADIO TV REPORTS, INC.

4701 WILLARD AVENUE, CHEVY CHASE, MARYLAND 20815 (301) 656-4068

---

FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

PROGRAM Morning Edition

STATION WAMU-FM  
NPR Network

DATE

*May*  
~~April~~ 14, 1985 6:00 A.M.

CITY Washington, D.C.

SUBJECT CIA/Bombings in Beirut

SCOTT SIMON: The Central Intelligence Agency is denying any connection with a devastating car-bombing in Beirut last March 8th. That attack was directed at a militant Shiite Moslem leader who reportedly planned terrorist attacks on United States installations. More than 80 people were killed in that bombing, and the Shiite leader escaped.

Recent reports in the Washington Post and the New York Times have maintained that the CIA trained Lebanese anti-terrorist squad, and that it was this squad that hired others to stage the March car bomb attack.

The CIA insists that it never trained anti-terrorist units in Lebanon. And some members of the House of Representatives are calling for a review of these claims and these counter-claims.

NPR's Catherine Ferguson reports.

CATHERINE FERGUSON: Despite the CIA's denial that it conducted a training program in Lebanon, a number of members of Congress [unintelligible]. Several on the House and Senate Intelligence Committees were informed late last year. But this in itself has raised a question: Why didn't all the members on the two oversight panels know about it?

According to a congressional source, only the chairman and the vice chair of the House Intelligence Committee were briefed. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York, the past vice chair of the Senate panel, said he was told. But his successor in the new Congress, Democrat Patrick Leahy of Vermont, reportedly had to ask the CIA about this covert operation after

reporters asked him about it.

Yesterday at the White House, the State Department, and the CIA itself spokesmen said the Administration was in full compliance with the law.

A covert activity of this type is allowed as long as the CIA Director or another official keeps the two congressional oversight committees informed in a timely manner. And if the President cites extraordinary circumstances, the CIA only has to tell the chair and the vice chair of the committees. But according to a well-placed congressional source, if the President invokes extraordinary circumstances, he's required to explain why the full Intelligence Committee cannot be told of an operation. And according to this source, a presidential explanation about the Lebanese anti-terrorist training operation never came.

This episode raises a number of other questions, and the chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee has invited the CIA Director to appear before the committee tomorrow.

Yesterday, at a previously scheduled hearing on international terrorism, Senator Patrick Leahy made it clear that he supports the idea of tough action to combat terrorism.

SENATOR PATRICK LEAHY: The U.S. must be able to stop terrorists. If that requires preventive strikes, then the United States must be in a position to do that. And if they are unable to stop them before they strike, then they must be able to go after terrorists after the attack and then stop them once and for all.

FERGUSON: Leahy has said he is concerned about using foreign surrogates who, he said, might have their own agenda to carry out preemptive or retaliatory actions on behalf of the U.S.